

PM: A BN VICTORY IS WHAT REALLY COUNTS

By Harpajan Singh

KUALA TERENGGANU, Mon. — Barisan Nasional leaders should disregard personal differences and factionalism, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said they should collectively support any candidate picked by the party to contest in the general elections.

Saying that candidacy was secondary in a struggle where the victory of the party as a whole was important, the Barisan chairman added that nothing should stand in the way of Barisan's fight for a thumping majority to form a stable government.

He said he had found that a large number of younger leaders in the party was disregarding the party struggle as a whole and had adopted a narrow outlook in striving to ensure that candidates they favoured were fielded in the next elections.

This, he said, seemed to be a common "problem" among younger leaders of today who were divided into factions at various levels and who only seemed concerned to en-

sure that candidates they favoured won their individual seats.

"I have found that many of these younger leaders are adopting a narrow outlook as they were born after the Alliance was formed, and as such they do not understand the historic events that led to the

formation of the Barisan.

"They therefore do not realise their responsibility towards the coalition and naturally do not see and understand the importance of ensuring a victory of the Barisan as a whole for stability," he told newsmen after a closed-door meeting with

state Barisan leaders here.

Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, Gerakan chief Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik and Umno secretary-general Datuk Mohamed

Rahmat, said the Barisan leaders had also advised their respective supporters on this at the meeting.

He said that in the Barisan leaders' tour of the country, the leaders were advising the members and explaining the history behind the formation of the Alliance and the coalition to instil a collective Barisan spirit in them.

To a question, Dr Mahathir said the Barisan would make some changes in the list of candidates for the next elections but it would be a mix of old and new.

However, he said, what was important was that members from all component parties realised that it was the victory of the party which would matter in the end and not of one particular candidate.

"It does not matter whether there is a change in a seat. We definitely cannot find a candidate that will please all camps as there will be some factionalism.

"Even in my own seat, there are people who do not like me ... therefore our struggle should be in the party spirit," he added.